

SEATTLE'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 10-YEAR UPDATE

DRAFT Comprehensive Plan Goals for Jobs/Household Balance Proposed by City Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck May 4, 2004

Background

Below are two draft goals proposed by Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck for inclusion in the Urban Village Element of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as a revision to goal UVG8. These goals relate to the ratio between jobs and households. The City Council agreed to consider this proposal in Resolution 30662, adopted in March 2004. Comments on the information presented below will be accepted at the public meetings sponsored by the Department of Planning and Development and the Planning Commission on May 4 and May 12th. In addition, written comments will be accepted through May 28. Please send written comments to:

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Comments may also be sent via e-mail to peter.steinbrueck@seattle.gov.

In early August 2004, the Executive will make a recommendation to the City Council in response to this proposal, and the Council will consider its merits at that time.

Proposed Goals for Jobs/Household Balance

New Goal UVG18 in the “Urban Centers” section of the Urban Village Element:

Encourage housing development so that by 2024 the balance between jobs and households is improved by 25% in the Northgate Urban Center, 7% in the University Urban Center, and 20% in the combined Center City Urban Centers (Downtown, First Hill/Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, and Uptown).

This goal for jobs/household balance is intended to provide the opportunity for people to live and work in the same urban center by encouraging housing development. The goal proposes that we consider the urban centers that make up the “Center City” together, recognizing that benefits are gained from balancing the number of jobs and housing throughout this contiguous area.



In order to meet this goal, the housing estimate for the University Urban Center proposed in the City Staff Recommended Draft would be increased by 800 households, to a total of 2,100. These additional households could be accommodated without zoning changes. The 800 households would be transferred from the South Lake Union estimate in the Staff Draft, bringing the total there to 9,100 households. See the chart on page 3 comparing the 2004 ratios of jobs to households with the ratios expected in 2024 if growth estimates are met.

New Goal UVG19 in the “Urban Centers” section of the Urban Village Element:

Encourage housing development so that by 2024, a ratio of 4.5 jobs per household is achieved in the University Urban Center and the combined Center City Urban Centers (Downtown, First Hill/Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, and Uptown); and a ratio of 3.3 jobs per household or better is maintained in the Northgate Urban Center.

This goal sets target jobs/household ratios for urban centers, as a companion to Goal UVG18, which calls for improvements in the ratios. The proposed targets are based on the VISION 2020 Plan adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council. This Plan sets a target of 80 employees and 20 households per acre for Seattle’s downtown (a ratio of 4), and 50 employees and 20 households per acre (a ratio of 3.3) for other urban centers in the region.

Northgate is close to achieving the 3.3 ratio now, and would exceed this goal by 2024 if the estimates are met. However, for the Center City and University, a more realistic goal of 4.5 jobs per household is proposed. This slightly higher ratio takes into account that these two areas have the highest concentration of jobs in the region, and that both have excellent transit service, which mitigates the effect of having lower numbers of households per acre than called for in the VISION 2020 Plan.

Revise Goal UVG8 in the Urban Village Element:

Accommodate the City’s existing and future housing needs through maintenance of existing residential neighborhoods and creation of new residential neighborhoods. Encourage housing development so that by 2024, a citywide ratio of 1.8 jobs per household is achieved.

This goal addresses the importance of providing adequate housing throughout Seattle to accomplishing the City’s growth management strategy. If the City’s estimates for jobs and households are met, the jobs/household ratio proposed in the revised goal would be achieved. If in future years it appears that we may not meet this citywide ratio, the goal would focus the City’s efforts on developing additional housing.

Comparison of Urban Centers Current and Projected Jobs to Household Ratios

Urban Centers	2002 Jobs per Acre	2004 Households per Acre	2004 Ratio of Jobs to Households	
Center City*	316	60	5.3	
1st Hill/Capitol Hill	41	25	1.6	
Downtown	165	16	10.3	
South Lake Union	58	4	14.5	
Uptown	52	15	3.5	
Northgate	27	8	3.4	
University**	43	9	4.8	
	Estimated 2024 Jobs per Acre	Estimated 2024 Households per Acre	2024 Ratio of Jobs to Households	% Change if Estimates are met
Center City*	456	111	4.2	-20%
1st Hill/Capitol Hill	47	30	1.6	-5%
Downtown	213	28	7.6	-26%
South Lake Union***	135	30	4.5	-69%
Uptown	61	20	3.0	-12%
Northgate	38	15	2.5	-25%
University** ***	53	12	4.4	-8%

*Center City includes downtown and the adjacent urban centers

**The household numbers for the University District do not include on-campus housing.

***These estimates assume that 800 households are transferred from the South Lake Union estimate for 2024 to the University District.